

# Fine Arts - Theatre Course Descriptive Guide

## Second Grade [1997]

### ***Course Description***

The curriculum is written to aid the teacher and student to facilitate the learning of theatre as an art form. Four standards are included: playmaking, acting, understanding art forms (not introduced until fourth grade), analyzing and constructing meanings (not introduced until fourth grade). One, two, three, or all four standards may be addressed in every theatre lesson plan. In theatre, the emphasis is always on engaging the child in-role through the four essential processes of planning, playing, examining, and evaluating. Theatre classes may last from 15 to 90 minutes based on grade level, amount of curriculum integration, and complexity of lesson planning ranging from simple drama exercises to fully developed classroom dramatizations (which may take days or weeks to complete). Although sharing theatre work within a class or occasionally with other classes is an acceptable part of the process at all grade levels, staging plays for public audiences is NOT a priority, especially prior to the fourth grade.

### ***Core Standards of the Course***

**TOPIC:** Playmaking

### ***STANDARD: 1320 - 01***

The student will plan and improvise plays based on personal experience and heritage, imagination, literature, and history for informal and formal theatre.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

Plan, with the teacher, appropriate actions for all characters in a story and other justifiable actions motivated by the story.

- Plan and pantomime the actions of the characters mentioned in a story.

Strategy Example:

Tell or read the students a story about caterpillars becoming butterflies; e.g., Hope for the Flowers. As caterpillars shed their last skin, they transform into a chrysalis. Use old crumpled newspapers and masking tape to make the chrysalis for each caterpillar. Then with the help of "becoming" music, each new butterfly struggles to get out of their chrysalis one body part at a time. Finally, all emerge as beautiful butterflies. How will they pantomime drying their wings? Finally, with the help of uplifting music, they all risk flying! Identify specific "actions" chosen by students for their character that can be clearly observed in the pantomime.

- Pantomime justifiable actions motivated by a story but not mentioned in the story.

Strategy Example:

Select a story with lots of interesting and imaginative action; e.g., Where the Wild Things Are.

Plan, with the teacher, dialogue and physical attributes for characters made up of two or more actors.

- Using human shadow play, pantomime characters made up of two or more actors interacting with other characters in a poem or a story as the teacher reads it.

Strategy Example:

Have students create a huge snake or dragon made up of several actors, or a snake or dragon with many heads as in classical mythology. (See Language Arts Core.)

- Improvise brief dialogue scenes between two characters in a story. At least one

character must be made up of two or more actors.

Strategy Example:

Have students consider improvising comic scenes between strange creatures meeting for the first time in a public place. Consider creating many headed and strangely arranged aliens.

Plan, with the teacher, a new complication that fits the given circumstances of a familiar story and adds tension. (See Language Arts Core.)

- Plan and dramatize a new complication added to a familiar story.

Strategy Example:

In The Lion and the Mouse, the Mouse pulls the thorn out of the Lion's paw, saves his own life, and gains a friend. Add the complication that the paw is swollen, the Lion can't hunt, and hence can't eat. Now what will the Mouse do to save his own life and help his new friend? A "friend" who is looking very, very hungry.

- Plan and dramatize a new complication that leads to an alternative ending.

Strategy Example:

In James and the Giant Peach, what might be the ending if James falls off the peach in the middle of the night while all are sleeping? In the morning he finds himself on an island in the middle of the ocean. The peach and his new friends are long gone. How could this complication change the ending? Plan and improvise possible changed endings.

## **TOPIC:** Acting

### ***STANDARD:***

A student will cooperate, imagine and assume roles, explore personal preferences and meanings, and interact in classroom dramatizations.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

Develop body awareness and spatial perception through movement and pantomime.

- Move isolated body parts to an established rhythm.

Strategy Example:

Use music with a strong beat. Have students move only one body part at a time. With each drum beat, add an additional body part until everything is moving as directed. (See Dance Core.)

- Use tension and relaxation to transform an object.

Strategy Example:

Have students pretend to be ice cream left out on the kitchen counter in the sun. They melt into pools of sticky ice cream. You pretend to pour them back into bowls, place them in the freezer, and refreeze them. (See Dance Core.)

- Pantomime working with imaginary objects with attention to detail.

Strategy Example:

Have students use imagination and sensory detail. Pretend to open a package and discover that someone has given them a novel tool, toy, or game. Details are important. (See Dance Core.)

- Pantomime the actions of people who build things for a living.

Strategy Example:

Students might consider being carpenters building a house, engineers building a bridge, brick layers building a wall, baker building a wedding cake, fashion designer building an outfit, etc. Details are important.

Develop expressive use of the voice.

- Imitate the sound and dialogue of various characters.

Strategy Example:

Have students talk like a troll, an elf, a clown, an alligator, a kitten, etc.

- Imitate the sounds and dialogue from a familiar story.

Strategy Example:

The teacher tells a story and stops when sounds and dialogue need to be filled in: "In the distance the sounds of severe thunder could be heard \_\_\_\_\_; and as the dark clouds raced towards the sailboat, the Captain said, "\_\_\_\_\_. One passenger disagreed, "\_\_\_\_\_." (See Language Arts Core.)

Develop sensory awareness for all five senses.

- Identify a sequence of sounds.

Strategy Example:

Give each student a long list of sounds, then take the students outside, sit absolutely still, and listen for three minutes. Have students number the sounds they heard in the order they heard them. Describe the sounds identified by the class.

- Increase awareness of different textures. (See Visual Arts Core.)

Strategy Example:

At desks, ask each student to identify the smoothest thing to touch, the roughest, the warmest, etc.

- Observe detailed behaviors in others.

Strategy Example:

Have students watch others at lunch to see how the activity of eating with a fork is a different behavior for each person when observed in detail.

- Maintain an olfactory journal.

Strategy Example:

Have students keep a journal of smells over a couple days, taking time to write down when and where they encountered each smell. Describe each smell to other students.

- Identify and describe specific tastes in isolation from the other senses.

Strategy Example:

Have students shut eyes, plug noses, and then place small pieces of food on their tongue; e.g., pieces of apple, onion, peanut butter, soda cracker. The student then tastes the piece of food and tries to identify and describe it. Abide by all district health policies concerning the handling and giving of food.

Develop concentration and a concern for detail when working in classroom dramatizations.

- Stay in the scene.

Strategy Example:

Have students pantomime receiving and eating a very messy sandwich. They are at a baseball game and must eat it on their laps. Concentrate on eating the entire sandwich while trying to watch the baseball game. Work for detail while staying in the scene.

- Maintain concentration despite unexpected distractions.

Strategy Example:

Have students repeat the pantomime suggested above. Other students will inject unexpected distractions. The distractions must fit the given circumstances of the scene; e.g., someone passes glasses of pop down the row, someone is in the wrong seat, someone has lost a wallet under the seats. The student is to deal with these distractions while maintaining the objectives of finishing the sandwich and watching the baseball game.